

MA THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

Public Information Department, 11150 East Blvd., Cleveland, Ohio 44106; 216/421-7340

PRESS RELEASE

September 14, 1990

PUBLIC PROGRAMS COMPLEMENT YORUBA EXHIBITION

Guest Lectures

- Wed/Oct 10, 2:15 pm** The River That Never Rests: Yoruba Art and Life. Henry Drewal, Consultant for African Art at The Cleveland Museum of Art, Evjue-Bascom Professor of Art History, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, and co-curator of the exhibition.
- Wed/Oct 17, 5:45 pm** Divine Countenance: Yoruba Signs of Kingship and Worship. Robert Farris Thompson, Professor of the History of Art, Yale University.
- Wed/Oct 31, 2:15 pm** Olowe: Master Sculptor of the Yoruba. John Pemberton III, Crosby Professor of Religion, Amherst College, and co-curator of the exhibition.
- Sun/Nov 18, 3:30 pm** New World Yoruba Art: Old Ideas Re-Thought. John Mason, Adjunct Lecturer, Cultural History, Caribbean Cultural Center, New York, and founder, Yoruba Theological Archministry, Brooklyn.
- Wed/Nov 28, 5:45 pm** Texturing Time and Space: Yoruba Performance Art. Margaret T. Drewal, Assistant Professor, Department of Performance Studies, Northwestern University.
- Wed/Dec 5, 2:15 pm** African Art and Leadership: The Owo Kingdom, 1400-1900. Rowland Ola Abiodun, Visiting Professor of Fine Arts and Black Studies, Amherst College, and co-author of the exhibition catalogue.

Demonstrations

Sun/Oct 28, 3:30 pm, & Wed/Oct 31, 12-4:30 pm

Technique, Tradition, and Innovation. Carving demonstrations by Lamidi Fakeye, Yoruba master sculptor, member of a four-generation family of sculptors and Professor of Sculpture at Obafemi Awolowo University in Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Wed/Dec 5, 4:30 pm

The Sculptured Head: A History of African Hairstyles. Lecture and demonstration of African hair braiding by Majeedah Taufeeq, a member of the National Braiders Guild and its regional director for Ohio. Taufeeq has lectured at Cleveland State University and traveled to West Africa to study hair styles.

Gallery Talks/Tours

1:30 & 3:30 pm each of these dates:

Wed/Oct 10, Dec 5; Sat/Oct 13, Nov 17, Dec 8; Sun/Oct 14, Dec 9

Sign-Language Tour (in sign language only): Sat/Nov 17, 10:30 am

Yoruba Film Festival*

Wednesdays, Nov 7 through 28, 7:30 pm unless noted

A rare opportunity to sample recent Nigerian films dealing with Yoruba culture and mythology, some in the Yoruba language. All are area premieres. Tickets sold at the door: general admission \$3, Museum members \$2. For more information call ext. 403.

- Nov 7 Efunsetan Oniwura, 1981. Villagers challenge their tyrannical ruler in this adaptation of a popular Yoruba play. Directed by Bankole Bello. Yoruba with subtitles 8 pm.
- Nov 14 Black Goddess, 1978. In a tale steeped in history and myth, a young black man attempts to reconnect with his African ancestry. Directed by Ola Balogun.
- Nov 21 Iwa, 1989. Contemporary story involves religion and spiritual forces. Directed by Lola Fani-Kayode. Yoruba with subtitles.
- Nov 28 Eewo (Taboo), 1986. An account of drug abuse in modern Nigeria infuses Yoruba mythology into contemporary social realities. Directed by Ladi Ladebo.

In the Dark About Art: Films on Art and Artists

Wednesdays, 12:30 & 7 pm

- Oct 17 Nigeria, Its Art and Its People, color, 28 min.
- Oct 24 Nigerian Art--Kindred Spirits, color, 58 min.
- Oct 31 Yoruba Divination and Sacrifice, B&W, 13 min. Music of Africa, B&W, 30 min.
- Nov 7 The Slave Coast, color, 50 min.
- Nov 14 New Images, Art in Changing African Society, color, 25 min.

Videos

"The World Began at Ile-Ife" (18 min), is shown continuously during the exhibition. "Yoruba Performance" (25 min) features unique footage of performance art and rituals taken by Henry Drewal, one of the curators of the exhibition; shown Sat/Nov 10, 17, and 24, continuously 2-4 pm each date.

Family Express: Art Activities Designed for Families

Sun/Nov 18, 3-4:30 pm

African Masks. Create your own mask like those in the exhibition. Meet in North Lobby. Pre-registration is not required. Families may come and go at their leisure.

Dance

See attached release about these performances. For further information call ext. 413.

- Wed/Oct 10, 7 pm Imani African-American Dance Company
- Sun/Oct 21, 4 pm The Group Alafia (Afro-Brazilian music and dance)

Music*

Fri/Nov 16, 8 pm Dizzy Gillespie Sextet (Afro-Cuban jazz) Tickets: patrons \$50; general admission \$20; Museum members \$18. Co-sponsored by the Northeast Ohio Jazz Society. See attached release about this performance. For further information call ext. 279.

Sun/Nov 11, 3:30 pm Film: A Night in Havana: Dizzy Gillespie in Cuba (USA, 1989). Area premiere of a music-filled film record of a 1985 trip to Cuba by the trumpeter who introduced Afro-Cuban rhythms into American jazz. Directed by John Holland. Color, 84 min. Tickets sold at the door: general admission \$3, Museum members \$2.

*Admission fee. All other programs are free.

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Yoruba: Nine Centuries of African Art and Thought was organized by The Center for African Art in New York, with the support of grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the New York State Council on the Arts. The Cleveland showing is assisted by the Ohio Arts Council. Many of these public programs have been made possible by LTV Steel.

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Glossary of Yoruba Terminology

ako	Naturalistic life-size effigy used in funeral ceremonies among the Owo Yoruba.
ashe	The life force possessed by all individuals and things, unique to each one.
aye	The world--the visible, tangible realm of the living.
babalawo	Literally "Father of ancient wisdom," or diviner, who uses the rituals and poetry of Ifa to reveal cosmic forces.
divination tapper	An implement used to invoke the deity Orunmila, founder of the Ifa divination system, and other forces. At the beginning of the Ifa session, the priest taps the divination tray with the tapper and greets the spiritual forces.
edan	Paired male and female brass figures cast on iron spikes and joined at the top by a chain. They symbolize the Oshugbo and evoke the importance of the bond between males and females in society.
Egungun	Means "power concealed;" masking performance for the ancestors. The performance of Egungun commemorates both past relationships and eternal ones.
ere ibeji	Carved wood memorial images for departed twins.
Eshu/Elegba	The agent of effective action, who personifies the unpredictable nature of human experience. Eshu's constant and often unsettling activity reminds humans of their need for guidance.
Gelede	Masking tradition of the western Yoruba peoples that pays homage to the spiritual powers of elderly women.
Ifa	Along with Eshu/Elegba, a sacred power that stands at the crossroad between the otherworld and the world of the living. Ifa is a Yoruba system of divination, offering humans the possibility of knowing the forces at work in specific situations in their lives.
Ijebu	Yoruba group near the Niger River delta; also a major region for metal casting.
ikat	A method of making textiles: lengths of hand-spun thread are tied at various intervals before being dipped into vats of indigo dye; the thread resists the dye wherever it is tied, creating designs in shades of blue.
Ile-Ife	The "cradle" of Yoruba civilization; literally, "home-spread." Often called Ife.

ipawo ashe	Literally "hand-held staff of authority/life force" carried by all alaashe--those who possess and use ashe on behalf of their followers (i.e., chiefs, priests, Oshugbo elders, and kings). The sound from its bells or rattles is meant to reach far beyond the immediate surroundings to the otherworld of gods and ancestors. Usually bronze or brass.
iwa	Inherent nature or personality, unique to each person and thing.
Oduduwa	The founder and first king of the Yoruba at Ile-Ife.
Olodumare	The High God of the Yoruba pantheon, standing for the ultimate coherence of the universe.
Olowo	King in Owo.
ona	Art; embellished, evocative form; skillfully transformed media.
onile	"Owner of the House," a pair of free-standing male and female brass figures symbolizing the original progenitors and the male and female members of the Oshugbo. Reserved for private, ceremonial use.
Ooni	King in Ile-Ife.
orisha	Gods.
Oro	Society responsible for enforcing decisions made by Oshugbo and supervising all burial procedures. Like Oshugbo, Oro carries out its work in secret to protect members from retribution and social or political pressures.
orun	The otherworld.
Orunmila	Ifa divination deity, the founder of the Ifa divination system.
oshe Shango	A double axe dance wand carried by devotees of Shango.
Oshugbo	Council of male and female elders among the Ijebu Yoruba, responsible for the selection, installation, and burial of kings; they render judgment and mete out punishment for serious crimes. Known as Ogboni among the Yoruba of the Oyo area.
Owo	Precolonial kingdom between Ile-Ife and Benin City in eastern Nigeria.
Oyo-Ile	City in northern Yorubaland that was the capital of the Oyo Empire (1680-1830). Often called Old Oyo.
Shango	The deified fourth king of Oyo-Ile, depicted in a variety of sculptural forms and celebrated in oral poetry.